

Message Text

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ORIGIN INR-05

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R 172324Z DEC 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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STADIS//////////

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: APER, MILI

SUBJECT:PROPOSED ASSIGNMENT OF A/ARMA

1. DOD/DIA HAS REQUESTED THAT MAJOR CHANDLER P. ROBBINS, III, USA, ASSIGNED TO CINCEUR WITH DUTY STATION USDAO VIENNA SINCE AUGUST 1973 BE GRANTED A DIPLOMATIC PASSPORT AND TITLE. HE FILLS A BILLET PREVIOUSLY HELD BY MAJOR GEORGE MCGOVERN.

2. ACCORDING TO DIA, MAJOR ROBBINS EFFORTS ARE DEVOTED PRIMARILY TO SECURITY ASSISTANCE MATTERS WHICH REQUIRES FREQUENT CONTACT WITH HIGH RANKING OFFICIALS OF THE AUSTRIAN DEFENSE MINISTRY AND EXTENSIVE TRAVEL THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. IN THIS CAPACITY DOD FEELS STRONGLY THAT DIPLOMATIC STATUS WOULD GREATLY FACILITATE THE CONDUCT OF HIS WORK.

3. SINCE VIENNA'S STAFFING PATTERN AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, '74

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LISTS MAJOR ROBBINS AS CHIEF FOR MILITARY SALES, DEPARTMENT

ASSUMES THAT HE IS MEMBER OF TWO-MAN MAAG UNIT CARRIED AS AUGMENTATION TO DEFENSE ATTACHE OFFICE. AS OF LAST SPRING DOD/ISA LISTED 28 SUCH POSITIONS IN WORLDWIDE MAAG COMPLEMENTS. NUMBER OF SUCH UNITS MAY WELL INCREASE IN FUTURE. TO DEPARTMENT'S KNOWLEDGE NO OFFICER IN THESE UNITS CURRENTLY HOLDS DIPLOMATIC TITLE.

4. IN VIEW OF THIS CONTEXT DECISION TO APPROVE DIPLOMATIC TITLE FOR MAJOR ROBBINS COULD SET A PRECEDENT, WITH CONSEQUENCES EXTENDING BEYOND SITUATION IN AUSTRIA. WHILE WE UNDERSTAND FROM DIA THAT EMBASSY HAS INFORMALLY EXPRESSED SYMPATHY FOR THE DIA PROPOSAL, WE ARE CONCERNED TO KNOW WHETHER DIPLOMATIC STATUS WOULD MATERIALLY ENHANCE MAJOR ROBBINS' EFFECTIVENESS. WE NOTE THAT HE HAS APPARENTLY PERFORMED HIS FUNCTION FOR OVER A YEAR WITHOUT SUCH STATUS, AS DID HIS PREDECESSOR.

5. FACT THAT MANY AGENCIES AND PROGRAM MANAGERS SEEK DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS AND TITLES FOR THEIR OVERSEAS OFFICERS NECESSITATES THAT DEPARTMENT APPROACH CAREFULLY REQUESTS SUCH AS THE ONE FOR MAJOR ROBBINS.

6. DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S COMMENTS TO DOD/DIA'S PROPOSAL AS NOTED ABOVE. KISSINGER

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